

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
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AMEMBASSY OSLO
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USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE

S E C R E T STOCKHOLM 0335

SHAPE FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MPOL, NATO, NO, GW, SW
SUBJECT: FRG PARTICIPATION IN NATO EXERCISES IN NORWAY

REF: (A) USNATO 808 (251532Z JAN 78), (B) HELSINKI 249
(241104Z JAN 78)

1. SWEDES BELIEVE NORWAY IS GETTING A BUM RAP AS REGARDS
ACCUSATIONS IT CAVED BEFORE SOVIET-FINNISH PRESSURES ON FRG
PARTICIPATION IN NATO MANEUVERS IN NORTHERN NORWAY. A
RELIABLE MFA SOURCE EMPHASIZED TO EMBOFFS ON JANUARY 25 THAT
THERE IS NO OFFICIAL GOS REACTION TO NORWEGIAN MOVE AND
WOULD LIKELY BE NONE. SPEAKING "STRICTLY OFF THE RECORD,"

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HOWEVER, HE WENT ON TO PRESENT AN UNOFFICIAL BUT INFORMED
INTERPRETATION. HE SAID THE NORWEGIAN INFORMAL DECISION
NOT TO INCREASE FURTHER FRG TROOP PARTICIPATION ABOVE
"ARTIC EXPRESS" LEVEL IN NORTHERN NORWAY EXERCISES WAS
IN FACT TAKEN LAST NOVEMBER, BEFORE KOSYGIN'S HIGHLY
PUBLICIZED FIST-POUNDING SESSION IN HELSINKI. IT WAS
AN UNFORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCE THAT INTERVENING KOSYGIN

INCIDENT LENT SOME CREDENCE TO INTERPRETATION THAT NORWEGIANS WERE BULLIED INTO SUBMISSION. SWEDES UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT GON AT THIS TIME HAS NO INTENTION OF PUBLICLY SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT.

2. THE SWEDES ARE COGNIZANT OF THE FACT THAT DECISIONS ON TROOP PARTICIPATION ARE TAKEN TWO YEARS IN ADVANCE OF EXERCISES. ALTHOUGH A FORMAL GON DECISION ON 1980 PARTICIPATION WILL NOT BE TAKEN BEFORE MAY IF NOT SEPTEMBER OF THIS YEAR, SWEDES WERE AWARE OF GON NOVEMBER DECISION TO STABILIZE FRG PARTICIPATION AT 1978 LEVELS.

3. ASKED FOR A SWEDISH REACTION, SOURCE SAID HE BELIEVES GOS IS FULLY SUPPORTIVE OF GON DECISION. SWEDES CONSIDER IT MAKES LITTLE SENSE FOR NORWAY, GIVEN THE ALREADY FULL PLATE OF PROBLEMS, TO ADD STILL ANOTHER ISSUE TO ITS STRAINED RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS AND TO INCREASE FINNISH DIFFICULTIES. NORWAY HAS ALREADY SHOWN MORE COURAGE IN ITS DEALINGS WITH SOVIETS THAN MOST OTHER EUROPEAN NATO GOVERNMENTS, SOURCE OPINED.

4. SWEDES BELIEVE ISSUE IN GON VIEW IS ESSENTIALLY ONE OF PRINCIPLE. WITH FRG ALREADY PARTICIPATING AT SATISFACTORY LEVELS IN NATO EXERCISES IN NORWAY AND FRG WAR SHIPS PERIODICALLY CALLING AT NORWEGIAN PORTS, THE PRINCIPLE HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED THAT FRG IS A FULL PARTNER
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AND ALLY. SWEDES CAN UNDERSTAND FRG NOT WISHING TO BEAR INDIGNITIES OF DISCRIMINATION IN RELATIONS WITH NATO ALLY 30 YEARS AFTER WW II, BUT GERMANS THEMSELVES SEE THEIR NATO ROLE IN TERMS OF DEFENDING CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN EUROPEAN FLANK. SINCE FRG ROLE IN NORDIC SECURITY HAS ALWAYS BEEN STRICTLY LIMITED, SWEDES SEE NO USEFUL PURPOSE SERVED IN MOVING SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF GERMAN TROOPS SO CLOSE TO SOVIET-NORWEGIAN BORDER. FROM UNOFFICIAL SWEDISH PERSPECTIVE, THEREFORE, THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT GON MADE SENSIBLE DECISION--AND MADE IT NOT UNDER THE SOVIET GUN.

5. SOURCE, WHO FOLLOWS NORDIC AFFAIRS CLOSELY, SAID HE DOUBTED THERE WOULD BE SUSTAINED NEGATIVE REACTION IN NORWAY TO GON MOVE, ALTHOUGH SOME ELEMENTS OF MEDIA AND STORTING WOULD PROBABLY CRITICIZE GOVERNMENT FOR NOT PROVIDING SUFFICIENT JUSTIFICATION FOR SUCH SERIOUS STEP.

6. MFA IN COURSE OF WEEK WILL BE RECEIVING FINNISH FOREIGN MINISTER VAYRYNEN AND FOREIGN POLICY EXPERT KEIJO KORHONEN. NORWEGIAN MFA OFFICIAL (WE BELIEVE STOLTENBERG) WAS IN STOCKHOLM AT MFA ON JANUARY 25. WE ASSUME GON LIMITATION ON FRG TROOPS MATTER OF DISCUSSION AND WE WILL SEEK ADDITIONAL SWEDISH VIEWS

AFTER COMPLETION OF THESE VISITS.

KENNEDY-MINOTT

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